



Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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Joint operation to locate and recover missing Kansas foster children concludes

SEDGWICK & JOHNSON COUNTY— Last week, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI), came together with more than 100 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, for a joint effort led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Inspector General (OIG), Office of Investigations (OI).

The effort was a part of the HHS OIG OI's Operation HOPE. It aimed to locate and recover children missing from the Kansas Foster Care Program. The operation was successful in the recovery of 18 program runaways.

Throughout the week of Nov. 12, law enforcement operated from command posts in Sedgwick and Johnson counties for the purpose of ensuring the safety and well-being of foster children, and identifying and eliminating, waste, fraud and abuse occurring within the state administered foster care program. The geographical areas of focus for the operation were Sedgwick County, Johnson County, and Wyandotte County, though the effort ultimately spanned many Kansas counties and saw leads generated and forwarded to other states.

Steve Hanson, Special Agent in Charge, HHS/OIG/OI, Kansas City Region, stated, "One of our office's highest priorities is to ensure the safety and security of our most vulnerable youth population. As the lead agency with oversight responsibilities of the \$5.7 billion dollar foster care program, we have a responsibility to ensure these children are receiving quality care and services."

Participants:

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations

Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations

Federal Bureau of Investigation

United States Marshals Service

Kansas Bureau of Investigation

Kansas Highway Patrol

Johnson County Sheriff's Office, Olathe, KS

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Wyandotte County Sheriff's Office, Kansas City, KS
Overland Park Police Department, Overland Park, KS
Wichita Police Department, Wichita, KS
Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office
Sedgwick County Child Advocacy Center
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
National Smuggling and Trafficking Center (NSTC)
Department of Health and Human Services-Administration for Children and Families
Office of Tracking in Persons
Children's Bureau
Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center (MOCIC), Springfield, MO
Kansas Department for Children and Families, Topeka, KS

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